(c) what is the total amount of foreign exchange spent on the import of coking for steel plants each year during the last three years; and

(d) what measures have been taken by Gov£rnment to improve production of good quality of coal in the country to minimise dependence on imports for the supply of coking coal to steel plants in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT); (a) to (c) The Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) have been importing low ash metallurgical coking coal of prime grade variety primarily to cover the shortfall between the yearly coking coal requirement and its corresponding availability from domestic sources.

The quantity of coking coal imported by SAIL during the last three years and its approximate C&F value are given below:

Year	Quantity in million tonnes	Approximate C & F Value
		(Rupees in Crores)
1983-84	0.463	37 5
1984-85	0.665	55.8
1985-86	2.034	161.8

(d) In order to augment supply of coking coal to the steel plants, Coal India Limited is taking up new projects for coking coal mines and also expediting the commissioning of new washeries. Necessary action for the modernisation and modifications of the existing washeries is also being taken by Coal India limited.

Central Organisation for Marketing Fertiliser

2418. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to establish a Central Organistion for marketing of fertilisers; and

'(b) if so, what are the deatils thereof and what are the advantages of such an organisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) and (b) A Working Group has been set up to examine whether W would be desirable to set up a Central Organistion for marketing of fertilisers. It has not yet submitted its report.

Financial assistance to Maharashtra to fight scarcity conditions

2419. SHRI SURESH KALMADI; Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Maharashtra has sought Rupees 450 crores from the Centre to fight scarcity conditions in the state; and

(b) if so, what decision has been takes by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Maharashtra has submitted a memorandum on 12-11-1986 seeking Central assistance of Rs. 450. 51 crores. It has been decided to depute a Central Team to make an assessment of the requirement of Central assistance.